



MEDIA RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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SCOTT AFB CANCELS 2004 OPEN HOUSE

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375th AW Public Affairs

Due to a reduction in fiscal year 2004 base operating support funds and continued high operations tempo, the base's senior leadership announced the cancellation of Scott Air Force Base's 2004 open house this week.

"We deeply regret not being able to host our open house at Scott this year," said Col. Barbara Faulkenberry, 375th Airlift Wing commander. "However, our funds are very limited, and our people are heavily tasked in supporting mission requirements - both here and around the world." Funding for the open house ultimately forced the final decision in canceling the event for this year.

"Our Operations and Maintenance funding for the 375th Airlift Wing at Scott was reduced by 15 percent from last year's level," Lt. Col. Vicky McClendon, 375th Comptroller Squadron commander said. "Operations and maintenance funding is tight Air Force wide and you cannot continue to do more for less.

"After paying our contractual commitments and salaries; it leaves very little discretionary funding," Colonel McClendon said. "Scott has had the luxury of holding an open house every year; but will probably fall back in line with the majority of other AMC bases and hold an open house every other year."

While the base's senior leaders regretted canceling this year's event, they stressed that there are distinct advantages to making the announcement now.

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“Making the decision now to cancel this year's open house helps us focus our resources on the mission at hand,” Colonel Faulkenberry said. “Plus the bright side of this decision is that we can now begin our preparations for the base's 2005 open house. Hopefully, the extra time we gain by canceling this year's event will help us have a truly outstanding open house in 2005.”

According to Capt. April Cunningham, 375th AW chief of public affairs, more than 100,000 people attended last year's open house. The event was one of the largest of its kind in the Midwest, with people from states around the region visiting Scott AFB over the three-day event.

“We're proud of the support we receive from the local community surrounding Scott Air Force Base,” Captain Cunningham said. “When you have such a large number of people visiting your base for an open house without either the Thunderbirds or Blue Angels, it gives you a good indication of the broad-based support we have here.”

The date for the 2005 open house has not been set, but planning committees are already forming and making preparations for the event.

“While we're disappointed in canceling this year's open house, we're not stepping back from supporting our neighbors,” Colonel Faulkenberry said. “I'm looking forward to hosting the biggest open house that Scott has ever seen in 2005, and we'll be aggressively working with the local community to make it a reality.”

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Photos from the 2003 Open House are available for download in the 375th Online Media Center at http://public.scott.amc.af.mil/375aw/Media_Online/index.htm

For more information about this release, contact the 375th Public Affairs office at (618) 256-4241.